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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on a language variation model that incorporates a number of concepts from linguistic and rhetorical studies. The model views language variation as a product of two correlating causes: one, the user and his or her personal, regional, and social dialect; and the other, the user's use of the language in terms of such discourse features as subject, mode, purpose, and audience. The paper consists of an overview of the principles underlying the model together with a schema and accompanying taxonomy. A demonstration of how the model is introduced and applied is followed by suggestions for development and use in the classroom. The appendixes illustrate the application of the model to a piece of writing from J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye," and to a piece of spoken language from John F. Kennedy's inaugural address. A bibliography follows each of the sections of the paper.
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A LANGUAGE VARIATION MODEL FOR THE CLASSROOM

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This paper focuses on a language variation model that incorporates a number of concepts from linguistic and rhetorical studies. The model views language variation as a product of two correlating causes: one, the user and his or her personal, regional, and social dialect; and two, the second cause, the user's use of the language in terms of such discourse features as subject, mode, purpose, and audience.

The paper consists of an overview of the principles underlying the model together with a schema and accompanying taxonomy. A demonstration of how the model is introduced and applied is followed by suggestions for development and use in the classroom. The appendices illustrate the application of the model to a piece of writing from J.D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye and to a piece of spoken language from John F. Kennedy's "Inaugural Address". A bibliography follows each of the sections of the paper.

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LANGUAGE VARIATION MODEL

Controlling Purpose: This paper is to design a language variation model that will incorporate linguistic and rhetorical components and thus provide a pedagogical basis for teaching literature, language, and composition in the classroom.

OUTLINE

I. Introduction

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- B. Need
- C. Use

II. Language Variation Model

- A. Dialectal Features -- The User
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 - 2. Temporal-Spatial Characteristics
 - 3. Regional Characteristics
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- B. Discourse Features -- The User's Use
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 - 2. Modes of Discourse
 - 3. Keys of Discourse
 - 4. Functions of Discourse
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- A. Schema
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V. Bibliography

VI. Appendices

- A. Chart - Spoken Keys
- B. Application - Written Mode
- C. Application - Spoken Mode

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I. INTRODUCTION

Language Variation and its dimensions have received considerable attention in the last decade as both linguists and educators realize that the burner under the melting pot has been turned down. As a result, minority groups have surfaced to the top with increased numbers and potency. These groups, both ethnic and social, have demanded increased recognition and access to equal education and job opportunities. In response to these demands, doors to schools have swung wide open in an attempt to provide further education for these people who would not have had such educational opportunity a decade ago.

The language of these minority groups is rich and varied,

¹An earlier and shorter version of this paper was presented at the Conference of English Education, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, March 15, 1979.

different, yet not deficient. Through sharing the language of diverse cultures, teachers and students can gain considerable insight into the nature and effectiveness of language. Striving to achieve understanding of language differences among cultures can have as its ultimate goal a universal appreciation and acceptance of varied linguistic heritages as well as a greater awareness of the ever-evolving nature of language in general.

Because of the substantial research and publication in language variation, there exists the continuing need to organize this material in some orderly and workable fashion. As J.C. Catford (1965) points out, "The concept of the English language is so vast and heterogeneous that it is not operationally useful for many linguistic purposes, descriptive, comparative, and pedagogical." This paper is an attempt to design a Language Variation Model (LVM) that will map out the various dimensions of language in such a fashion as to be useful in the English classroom both in the theoretical and practical way.

This paper proposes then to combine previous models of language variation (Gregory, 1967; James 1970) with current research and publication, especially focusing on the features of discourse both spoken and written. The model should serve in much the same way as Max Bluestone's informal plan for writing.

The rough scheme is a map to the territory of my thoughts. The map is never precise, first because the territory has not been thoroughly explored and second because writing is in itself the discovery of new territory. I usually anticipate discovery in the act of composition. (quoted in Emig, 1971, p. 24)

The LVM then is the outline of a linguistic map to be filled in by teacher and students as they make their way through the study of

English. By observing the features of language and by discovering relationships among them, explorers of language can discover a better sense of the abstraction called, "English".

II. THE LANGUAGE VARIATION MODEL

The idea of a two dimensional model based on the concepts of the "user" and the "user's use" of language evolves from the work of a Canadian linguist, Michael Gregory (1967) and a Welsh linguist, Carl James (1970). Gregory in an article in Journal of Linguistics lists idiolect, temporal, geographical, social, standard and non-standard as dialectal varieties within the first dimension. In the second dimension (the "user's use" of language), Gregory treats the contextual categories of discourse, modes of discourse, and tenor of discourse.

In addition to Gregory, British linguists like Halliday, Strevens, Quirk, Firth, and Strang have been concerned with language variation for a longer time and more in depth than American linguists, who until relatively recently (Labov, 1966) have been mainly concerned with descriptive grammars. This paper incorporates a number of British studies, especially those concerning discourse features.

Carl James published an article in the English Journal (Nov. 1970) that discusses Gregory's language varieties and their possible use in the classroom. James places idiolect, temporal, regional, and social features on one side of a triangle model, register, mode, and style features on the other. His instruction between the two dimensions is "Correlations: Connect All the Category-Points." James' contribution, in addition to structuring the model for use in the high school, is to point out the importance of the correlation among the

several features.

From the work of Gregory and James, the following language variation model for the classroom has evolved. (See Figure 1 below) More recent work in discourse analysis by such linguists as M.A.K. Halliday along with such educators as James Britton and Janet Emig have enriched the discourse features resulting in a more comprehensive correlations. Our several classes of secondary and college students have contributed to the increased and on-going refinement of both the theory and application of the model.

LANGUAGE VARIATION MODEL

SCHEMA

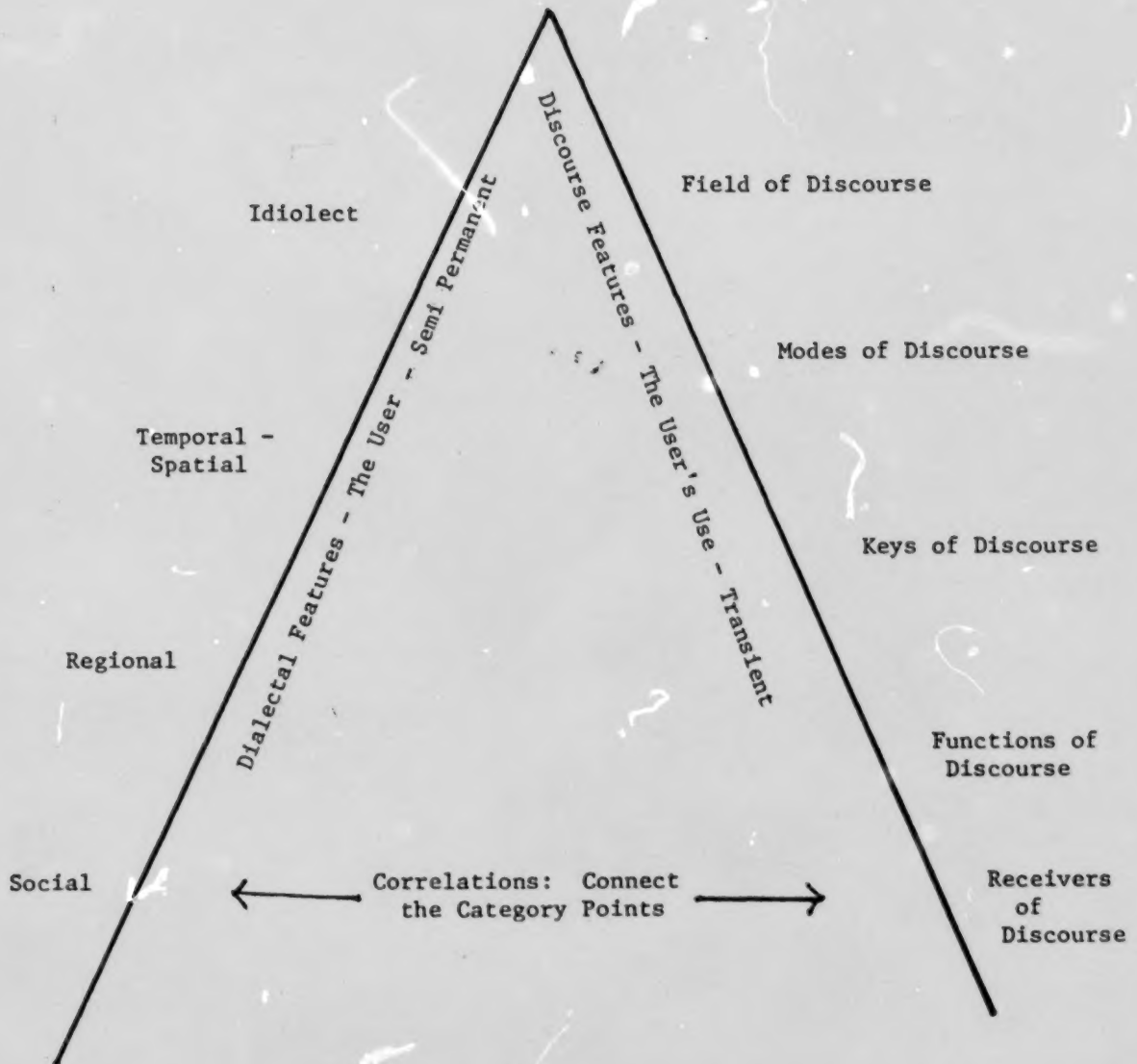


Figure 1 Language Variation Schema

LANGUAGE VARIATION MODEL - TAXONOMY

I. Dialectal Features (The User)

A. Idiolect

Voice Quality
 Speed of Delivery
 Hesitation Phenomenon (verbal pauses)
 Favored vocabulary, phrases syntactic structures
 Particular graphemes-phonemes
 Others

B. Temporal-Spatial

Generation
 Age
 Grade
 Location
 Other

C. Regional

Pronunciation
 Vocabulary
 Syntax
 Idiom

Causes

History
 Geography

D. Social

Education

College Graduate of High School
 College Graduate
 High School frequently with specialized training
 Some High School
 Grade School or less

Intelligibility

Standard English
 Non-standard English

Class

Upper Class
 Upper Middle Class
 Middle Class
 Working Class
 Lower Class

Adjustment to Receiver

Status
 Knowledge
 Age
 Sex
 Social Situation

Environment

Mainstream
 Non-mainstream

II. Dialectal Features (The User's Use)

A. Field of Discourse

Levels

Technical
 Non-technical

Markers

Phonemes-Graphemes
 Grammar
 Morphology
 Syntax

Lexicon

B. Modes of Discourse

Spoken

Spontaneous
 Conversing
 Monologuing

Non-spontaneous

Reciting
 Speaking of what is written

Written

To be spoken as if not written
 To be spoken
 Not necessarily to be spoken
 To be read as if:
 heard
 overheard
 To be read

C. Keys of Discourse

Spoken Keys

Intimate
Casual
Consultative
Deliberative
Oratorical

Written Keys

Personal
Informal
Semiformal
Formal
Belletristic

D. Functions of Discourse

To express self
To create constructs
To convey information
To make contact
To persuade
To enlighten
Others

E. Receivers of Discourse

Spoken Mode

Well know audience - small
Well know audience - large
Unknown audience - small
Unknown audience - large

Written Mode

To self
To teacher
Trusted reader
Teacher-learner
Examiner
To Wider Audience (known)
Expert to layman
Individual to peer group
Group member to group
To Wider Audience (unknown)
Writer to public

DIALECTAL FEATURES

The dialectal features of the user are the "linguistic reflections of reasonably permanent characteristics of the USER in language situations." (Gregory, 1967, p. 181) In his model as well as the current schema, the features consist of idiolect, temporal-spatial, regional, and social features. The latter aspect could well have been further classified into social and cultural, but for a number of reasons, the cultural factor is subsumed by the social node. Each of the dialectal features will be discussed with reference to the bibliography. The emphasis, however, in this study is on the discourse features.

On some occasions the features, (for example, idiolect, regional) are discussed in terms of causes as well as effects in an effort not to prefigure the correlations but rather to more readily provide teachable concepts for the English classroom, especially those classes concerned with composition.

1. Idiolect

This is defined as the totality of the idiosyncratic speech or writing habits of the individual. It is the individual's unique dialect -- a product of life's experiences that set one person apart from all other individuals. On a spectrograph the voice print is as unique as fingerprints. Similarly, a complete analysis of a written idiolect would establish a unique combination of features belonging to the individual alone.

An introduction to the concept of idiolect especially suitable for

students is found in Geist (1970, pp. 42-52). After a description and analysis of a person's idiolect, a study of the possible causal factors proves interesting, and the LVM provides the process for exploring these possible cause-effect relationships.

Idiolect Characteristics:

Personal Traits

1. Voice Quality
2. Speed of Delivery
3. Hesitation Phenomenon
(stabilizers, fillers, verbal pauses)
4. Favored vocabulary
5. Graphology (handwriting, spelling)
6. Pronunciation (phrasing, intonation)

Some of the possible causes of idiolect will be discussed in the following three sections and will include such factors as: temporal-spatial (environment, time) regional (geography, location), and social (class, education, and gender).

2. Temporal-Spatial

The life experience of the user in terms of time and place determines the temporal and spatial dialect. This aspect of dialect can be seen from various perspectives ranging from categories of Old English, Middle English, Elizabethan English, Modern English to the differences between members of one generation and the next.

Influences such as those found in urban, rural, ghetto, and suburban environments are spatial factors also worthy of investigation.

An additional temporal influence, age levels, appears in the work of Labov (1966, 1971). Another study showing the importance of age and grade by Hockett (1950) reveals the regular change in habits which a speaker shows from one age level to another. Gleason (1965) also discusses age-grade factors and points out that generation differences are usually found in pronunciation and in basic grammatical habits. The age-grade differences, Gleason continues, are more likely to be superficial and affect vocabulary and style -- the most changeable elements in language. It is found that each generation preserves intact many of the language patterns as learned in childhood.

The correlation between temporal-spatial and the written and spoken keys should provide a jumping off point for class analysis and discussion. The use and misuse of slang is put in perspective when seen as attaching itself to a certain time, a certain age, and a certain place. Salinger's use of the temporal-spatial dialect in his writing (see Appendix B) is a fruitful example of this correlation. Other authors such as Warren Miller, Saul Bellow, Isaac Asimov, contain a wealth of contemporary examples. Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, William Bradford, Washington Irving, and Mark Twain provide passages for temporal-spatial study of language variation. When the language of these selections are seen in correlative patterning with such discourse features as audience and purpose, the richness and complexity of the literary language is revealed.

3. Regional Dialect

The influence of geography and history on a person's idiolect underlies the concept of the regional dialect. McDavid gives the following definition of regional dialect as a habitual variety of a

language that is "set off from all other habitual varieties by a unique combination of language features: words, meanings, grammatical forms, phrase structures, pronunciation, and patterns of stress, and intonation." (1971, p. 42)

An abundance of both introductory and advanced material on regional dialects is available ranging from such introductions as Shuy (1967), Reed (1973), Malmstrom (1968) to advanced studies of dialect as seen in Allen (1971), Kurath (1961), and Samarin (1967). Shuy's text is readily available and provides a substantial amount of material suitable for the classroom from dialect surveys to dialects found in literature. Regional features worthy of study include pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax, and idioms. A profitable classroom activity is to assign an essay analyzing student's own idiolect. This would focus on primary causes, effects, and significant correlations.

4. Social Dialect

A number of factors can be subsumed under the social features, including education, class, intelligibility, environment, responsibility, and adjustment to receiver. These aspects may be outlined as follows:

A. Education

1. College Graduate of Right School
2. College Graduate
3. High School graduate frequently with specialized training
4. Some High School
5. Grade School or less

(Labov, 1966)

B. Class

1. Upper Class
2. Upper Middle Class
3. Middle Class
4. Working Class
5. Lower Class

C. Intelligibility

1. Standard English
2. Non-standard English

(Gregory, 1977)

D. Environment

1. Mainstream
2. Non-mainstream

(Kochman, 1972)

E. Adjustment to Receiver

1. Status
2. Knowledge
3. Age
4. Sex
5. Social situation
6. Other

(Gleason, 1965)

These social features when combined with the other discourse features can provide rich dimensions when related to other aspects of language variation. These categories can also provide considerable insight into people and the communication process. Several studies have contributed to the further analysis of the role of social features in language variation.

Labov's work (1966) with the social stratification of English in New York City provides charts on class, education, and occupation and resulting effects upon language variation. Wolfram and Fasold (1974), Bernstein (1970), Kochman (1972) are also among the many linguists and sociolinguists having published studies in this area. Gleason (1965) discusses adjustment of the sender to the receiver. Labov (1971), as well as Giles and Powesland (1975), discusses sex, age, race, social status as personal attributes that often cause the speaker to adjust the language to the receiver accordingly.

The concept of environment includes the components of mainstream and non-mainstream, as distinct social features but related to temporal-spatial. Kochman (1972) discusses this aspect in the context of minority group lifestyles. The effects of such environmental influences upon lifestyle and those in turn upon language are evident when standardized tests are analyzed for cultural factors.

In studies by Wolfram and Fasold (1974) and Labov (1971), the concept of indicators, markers, stereotypes, and lexicon are defined. When these factors are analyzed in terms of the relationship between social dialects and discourse features, the results are especially informative.

DISCOURSE FEATURES

Gregory terms the discourse varieties as "The linguistic reflections of recurrent characteristics of user's use of language in a situation." (Gregory 1964, p. 185). In contrast to dialectal features, the discourse features can be seen as transient features, rather than permanent features. They are less a part of the user than a function of the situation(s) in which the language user finds himself. This current study reformulates as well as adds to Gregory and James in an effort to up-date the model but also to make it more pedagogically operational.

Two essential changes have evolved. First, neither Gregory nor James deals in depth with the concept of clock/keys as defined by Joos (1962) and Gleason (1965). This dimension is an important addition in terms of providing a more comprehensive correlation among modes, functions, and receivers of discourse.

A second change concerns "register" and "style" as used by Gregory and James. These two terms have so many varying meanings that they become extremely confusing. In this paper register is subsumed by Field of Discourse, but an equally protective approach might be one suggested by Gregory when he defines register as a configuration of field, mode, and tenors (1978, p. 33).¹ Style, an amorphous term, is left out of the discourse features and can instead be seen as a result of the "correlative patterning" of the dialect and discourse features. The depth of stylistic dimension depends on how far the investigator pursues the significant correlations.

The current model shows that the discourse features consist of five features: Field of Discourse, Modes of Discourse, Keys of Discourse, Functions of Discourse, and Receivers of Discourse.

1. Field of Discourse

Field of discourse is the term employed to designate language variety that is a function of what the user is talking or writing about. In short, it is the subject matter. A number of British linguists including Halliday, McIntosh, Strevens (1964) as well as Wilkinson (1971) and Quirk (1973) discuss "field of discourse." However, in most of these treatments the term field of discourse is subsumed under register along with modes and tenors of discourse. Other linguists reverse the procedure subsuming these features under field of discourse. Gregory (1967, pp. 194-95) discusses the

¹Register in this sense would make for a richer but considerably more complex text. However, Gregory does not give any rationale for leaving out function and receivers as influences on register. Also, the required time to describe correlative patterning of register in the non-linguistic classroom might prove too high a price to pay for enriched matrix.

terminology confusion in this area of study. The use of field of discourse in the LVM is close to what Quirk (1972) calls trade dialects and to what Wilkinson (1971) terms "Addressor-Subject Registers." That is to say, that field of discourse is governed by the linguistic selections made by the speaker/writer in keeping with the particular subject matter at hand.

Field of discourse can best be described in terms of levels and markers. The initial distinction under level is what might be called technical and non-technical English. (Gregory, 1967, p. 186). The English of mathematics, the English of psychology, Legal English, Literary Criticism English, Religious English would be examples of technical English. Technical English need not be restricted to academic subjects but rather can range from the language used by plumbers or electricians among themselves to the language of the stockbroker or even the language of the frisbee player.

Non-technical English is more closely related to the daily activities of shopping, playing, and visiting where unlike the technical English situations, more non-verbal communication can take place. Thus, there is not the need here for the precise language found in technical English. Most subjects have both a technical and non-technical level of language. (Most students possess both levels concerning at least one or two subject matters.) Certainly such a subject as linguistics can be talked about both technically and non-technically depending on the audience. For example, a discussion of dialects with colleagues with reference to isoglosses, relic vocabulary, and intrusive/linking "r's" would contrast with a discussion of dialects with the layman which would have as its

reference such terms as north country talk, old-fashion expressions, and accents. However, like many aspects in the LVM, the concept of frequency on a continuum from highly technical to decreasing technicality is the realistic perspective from which to study "levels" in the field of discourse.

The second subcategory of field of discourse, markers, provides not only for the classification of phonological and graphological distinctions in the language variation but also for morphological, syntactical, and lexical classifications. The precision of pronunciation, the choice of words, the complexity of syntax are all factors to be considered here. A minister's intonational patterns or the graphemes of the prayer book combined with the morphology such as "dost," "thou," "consecrate," "faith," and syntactic constructions such as "Eternal Father," and "Our Father which art in heaven," signal that the field of discourse is Religious with subcategories of +Christian, and +Liturgy, etc.

A descriptive approach to field of discourse (register) should include an analysis of the language variation inherent in a specific subject. This analysis should give insight and possible solutions to a number of communication problems ranging from overcoming the initial difficulty of assimilating the new language of an unfamiliar course, or even a new occupation, to the resolution of the common dilemma of "talking over (or under) one's head."

In the same manner, a study of field of discourse can become an interdisciplinary activity in the classroom. Each teacher regardless of discipline should teach the field of discourse appropriate to the subject. This does not just mean a vocabulary list, but each teacher

should be a teacher of language in this respect by providing the appropriate context for the words. Every teacher, but especially the composition teacher, can do a service to students by prewriting and prereading activities that help students become acquainted with the levels and markers appropriate to the field of discourse under consideration.¹

2. Modes of Discourse

The mode of discourse is the way in which the message is transmitted. The two modes considered in the LVM are the spoken and the written. Most of the differences between the two arise from two sources: the presence or absence of an immediate receiver, and the availability or lack of availability of resources to supplement the communication. For instance, in the written mode, the writer normally performs in the absence of a receiver, while in the spoken mode the receiver is usually in immediate focus thus providing various means of feedback. The tapping of complex nonverbal language to supplement the spoken mode is in direct contrast to the limited resources of conventional orthography. Consequently, the writer must impose much greater explicitness in the written mode of expression to compensate for the lack of non-verbal language.

Britton (1975) notes that the differences between writing and talking include the fact that talk is more expressive. The speaker is

¹ This approach to field of discourse and register is very much needed in such new fields as computer literacy. Novices are inundated with literally thousands of new terms. Many of these are undifferentiated and often only listed at the beginning or end of presentations.

not obliged to stay in the background as one might in writing. Talk relies on an immediate link with the listener, a group, or a whole class, where the rapid exchange of conversation allows many things to go on at once -- exploration, clarification, interpretation, differences of opinion, anecdotes, and exploitation. If something communicated is not clear to the receiver(s), then the user may give an explanation until it is.

Wilkinson (1971) points out that in addition to treating redundancy as an asset, the spoken mode has "echo sounding devices" that provide feedback either verbally or in looks and/or gestures. Another characteristic of the spoken mode occurs in its "stabilizers" which are the verbal pauses, the hesitations, words like er, mm, you know, right, etc. which keep a conversation going.

An interesting set of distinctions along the dimensions of modes of discourse is provided by Gregory (1967). Under the spoken mode he distinguishes spontaneous and non-spontaneous. Spontaneous is broken down into conversing and monologuing. Conversing is the medium through which there is a possibility of spontaneous interchange between two or more people. This has a close relationship to Labov's casual style (1966). Gregory notes that the grammar of conversation has a "certain incompleteness," and he provides characteristics and examples. Monologuing is the speech situation in which other people present, if any, do not join in. He notes that some after-dinner speeches and much of the teaching within the classroom fall into this category. Gregory goes on to develop quite a complete set of distinctions with ample definitions and examples that he schematizes as follows:

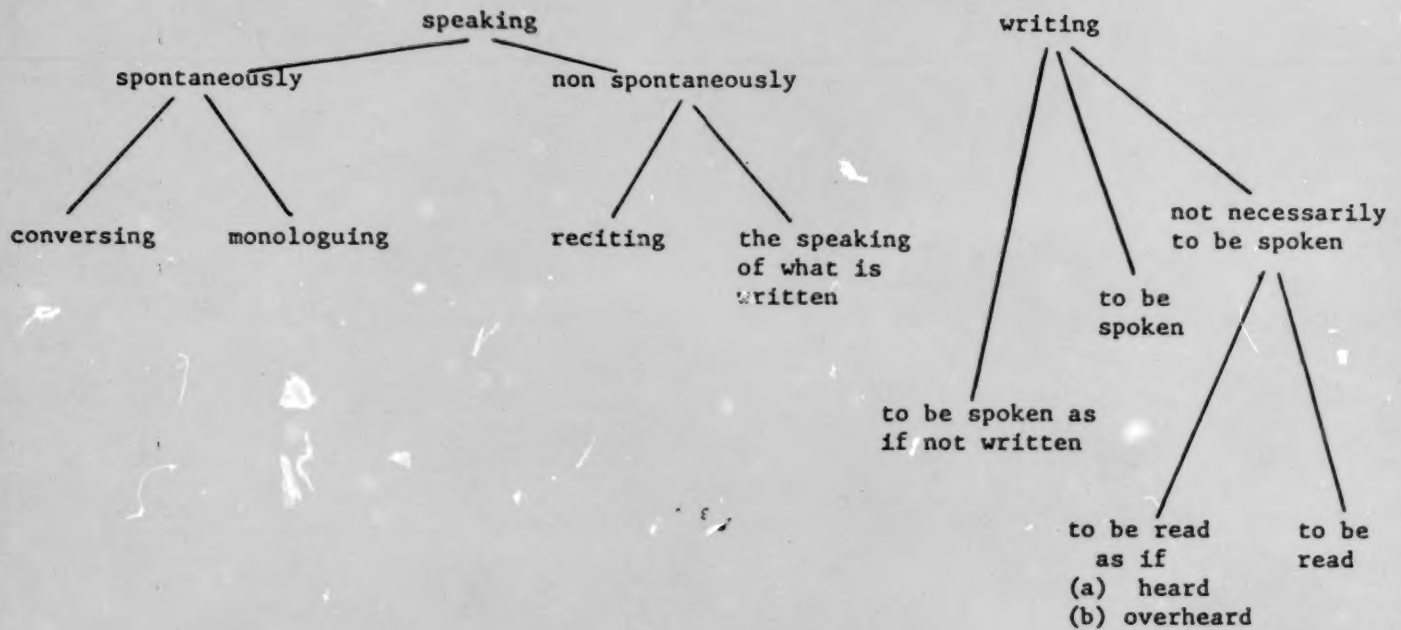


Figure 2 Mixed Modes (Gregory, 1967, p. 189)

The significance of the spoken and written modes is readily seen in the composition classroom as students reveal considerable competence in the spoken mode yet experience considerable difficulty with some of the keys of the written mode. Shaughnessy states "...without a better understanding of the differences between written and spoken language, we can't determine with accuracy what the students already know but cannot put into practice" (1977, p. 51). She goes on to say that while some errors are attributed to lack of experience in the written mode, others seem to be rooted in real differences between spoken and written sentences. "Speech usually follows normal word order and tolerates a high degree of redundancy, eventually refining itself in the dynamics of dialogue, however,

writing "withholds utterance in order to perfect it." (p. 52).

Writing depends on the subordination and coordination of ideas to each other. Translating from the spoken mode to the written becomes one of the main concerns of the composition teacher and the students.

3. Keys of Discourse

The description of the five spoken keys and the five written keys within the LVM is based upon the work of Joos (1962) and Gleason (1965). As mentioned previously the weakness of Joos' five styles is that he does not make enough distinctions between the spoken and the written modes. Joos' first four styles are more oriented toward speech while it is only the last, the frozen style, that deals with the written mode.

In contrast, Gleason separates the five styles into spoken and written keys, and in addition, makes three changes in terminology (two with Joos' concurrence). Gleason substitutes "key" for "style," "oratorical" for "frozen," and "deliberative" for "formal" when he treats the keys of the spoken mode. The breakdown of the characteristics of each key may be designated by the use of the following terms: purpose, speaker, audience, topics, information, load, code-labels, and linguistic features.

The consultative key will be developed more fully in the spoken mode as will the corresponding area of semiformal and formal in the written mode as these are the central keys from which many of the other keys acquire their characteristics. Much more work needs to be done in both modes, especially the written. The process of correlation remains for the teacher and student to do within their own classroom objectives. The keys for each of the modes breakdown initially as follows:

THE SPOKEN KEYS

Intimate Key
 Casual Key
 Consultative Key
 Deliberative Key
 Oratorical Key

THE WRITTEN KEYS

Personal Key
 Informal Key
 Semiformal Key
 Formal Key
 Belletristic

A more comprehensive analysis of these keys utilizing specific characteristics or "markers" for identification of the various keys can be outlined as follows:

A. Spoken Keys

1. Intimate Key

- a. Purpose: To communicate feelings more than public information; reminding more than informing; personal rapport; effective intimate key fuses two personalities.
- b. Speaker: Non-specific, one to one, between family members, lovers, husband and wife, close friends.
- c. Audience: Very close acquaintances such as family, close friends who know each other and situation well.
- d. Topics: Personal and daily affairs.
- e. Information Load: Excludes public information. Speaker shares feelings; body language important, touching.
- f. Code labels: Ready? Hot enough? (Intonation important)
- g. Linguistic Features:
 1. Extraction: a minimum pattern taken from casual sentences. "Help you?"
 2. Jargon: not ephemeral slang but part of the permanent code of the group.
 3. Vocabulary: limited use of vocabulary, body language important, few synonyms, very private language, grammar not important.

2. Casual Key

- a. Purpose: To communicate daily affairs, effective casual key integrates disparate personalities into a social group, develops rapport.

- b. Speaker: Non-specific, friends, insiders, one person, well-established relationship.
 - c. Audience: Complete rapport and mutual respect. Usual form of speech for friends, acquaintances, insiders; little reliance on listener's participation.
 - d. Topics: Personal and daily affairs, very little public information.
 - e. Information Load: Public sort of information that speaker takes for granted and alludes to rather than discusses; little background information given; receiver to understand without any aids; when public information omitted, conversation lapses into silence and/or kidding.
 - f. Code Labels: "Come on." "Wanna go?" "Need help?"
 - g. Linguistic Features:
 - 1. Ellipsis: unstresses words at beginning of sentences eliminated, "Coffee's cold." Omission of unstressed words -- articles, pronouns, auxiliaries, and be: "Car broke down," "Got a nickel?" "Anybody home?"
 - 2. Slang: current popular language rather than jargon or cant; metaphors and similes in abundance; "in" language.
 - 3. Vocabulary: little attention to grammar, no pre-planning necessary, spontaneous.
3. Consultative Key -- Consultative key is the most strictly organized type of language. It is central to all the other possibilities of grammar. The grammar of all the other keys are formed by adding or subtracting to the consultative grammar. The pronunciation of the other keys is described in terms of departures from the consultative pronunciation. The meanings of any word which occurs at all in the consultative key are basically its consultative meanings as necessitated by its own function: private, slang, technical, and allusive meanings respectively.
- a. Purpose: To communicate public information with those who share language but not necessarily the same stock of information; effective consultative key produces cooperation without necessarily integrating.
 - b. Speaker: non-specific, strangers with different information stock, one person to develop relationship with another; small group.
 - c. Audience: Norm for coming to terms with strangers and other chance acquaintances; listener participates fully,

continuously insuring that neither too little nor too much background information is given; alternating speech between sender and receiver.

- d. Information Load: Public sort of information; speaker states information as needed; when public information is unavailable, consultative key is broken off or adjourned.
- e. Topics: Everyday business (weather*, clothes, sports, etc.) not previously planned topics; speaker composes two or three seconds in advance.
*weather is a safe topic, because no one can do anything about it.
- f. Code Labels: Standard feedback signals such as "yes," "no," "uhuhuh," "mm." -- "Well," "yes," "o.k.," used to switch role of listener and speaker. All purpose words like "thing" as well as prepositions "on" "about," are skeleton keys -- distinction made between "can" and "may," in asking permission.
- g. Linguistic Features
 - 1. Run-on sentences connected by "and."
 - 2. Grammar complete; loosely constructed sentences; telescoping of sentences; occasional failure to follow sentence through: "Can I help...?"
 - 3. Diction kept in balance with situation; pronunciation clear, not cluttered.

4. Deliberative Key

- a. Purpose: To inform medium or large groups; occasionally used with single hearers; effective deliberative style informs individuals so that they can utilize information.
- b. Speaker: Toastmaster, after dinner speaker, lecturer-speaker detached from audience, some formality.
- c. Audience: Relatively less participation; distance greater than inconsultative; (distance-in-status or social position); used for initial conversation with stranger(s); structured time for participation; infrequent feedback; audience hears information once.
- d. Topics: Class lecture, after dinner speech, reporting.
- e. Information Load: Relatively high degree of information woven into speech, planning required; structured.
- f. Code Labels: "May" used in requesting permission, "May I help you?" Use of "one" -- "One must be prepared." "Er" occurs occasionally between thoughts.

g. Linguistic Features:

1. Complex sentence structure; advanced planning, and longer discourse with logical transitions and links between sentences; abrupt starts on new sentences (anacoluthon).
2. Explicit pronunciation; selective diction.
3. Precise intonation; elaboration.

5. Oratorical Key

- a. Purpose: To honor, to praise, to convince, to impress, etc; effective oratorical key entices audience in one way or another; attempts to cause a change in audience attitude.
- b. Speaker: orators, politicians, lawyers, preachers, speaker controls information and audience; formal stance and attitude.
- c. Audience: large audience, social strangers, never one person; audience only hears information once; no opportunity for feedback unless structured time is allowed.
- d. Topics: political, ceremonial, didactic.
- e. Code Labels: My fellow Americans, I stand here before you, I, We.
- f. Linguistic Features:
 1. Complex structured sentences.
 2. Balanced and parallel construction utilized.
 3. Correlative conjunctions (not only-but also; rather-yet; etc.)
 4. Elaborate rhetorical devices of various kinds.
 5. No slang, no ellipsis.
 6. Intonation stilted.

(The oratorical key could be refined and enriched considerably with further reference to Aristotle for arguments, Cicero for divisions, and Quintilianus for "styles.")

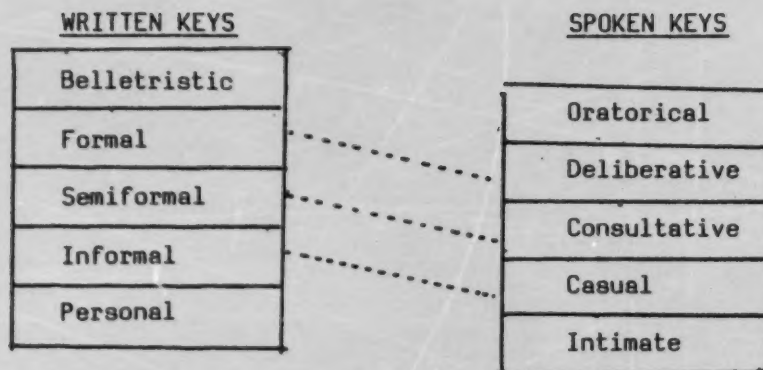
See Appendix A for chart that summarizes the characteristics and features of each of the five spoken keys.

B. Written Keys

The written keys are less sharply defined than the spoken keys. There is a good deal of overlapping between neighboring keys with marker frequency being the dominant criteria in establishing the boundaries of a key. As with spoken keys, some features are very characteristic of one key and are felt to be out of place if used in another. There is, however, less difference between a written passage in informal English and one in formal English than there would be observed between the spoken keys of casual and deliberative.

Gleason (1965) gives some interesting comparisons of form and function of the two sets of keys, concluding that formal writing has much the same function as deliberative speech, semiformal as consultative, and informal as casual. Belletristic writing can be compared in some ways to oratorical. These equations Gleason notes are only approximate, but indicative. In terms of form, it is difficult to match exactly written and spoken keys. If students and teachers transcribe from speech to writing, or render written prose to speech, they can have some indication of this imprecise relationship. Gleason concludes that if something is to be written so as to convey the same impression as would a deliberate speech, then it must have a somewhat more elaborate and formal structure. If a match for casual conversation is to be written, the difference in written structure will be extreme (1965, p.370).

The following chart is adapted from Gleason (1965, p. 371) to illustrate the relationship of spoken to written keys. Dotted lines join points that are functionally equivalent, that is they indicate approximately the same relationship between sender and receiver within the two modes.



The written keys are set up higher on the diagram to illustrate that there really is no spoken key that can handle belletristic as there is no effective way outside the use of phonemes to represent intimate spoken key in the written mode.

Obviously the written mode has the highest priority for the teaching of composition. There will not be, however, an attempt here to describe the keys in terms of purpose, audience, information, topics, and code labels as was done in the Spoken Keys. This is a task for the individual instructor and the students to investigate in terms of classroom goals. The relationship of written keys to spoken keys and to the categories of function of discourse and receivers of discourse should prove an interesting and profitable exploration.

B. Characteristics of the Five Keys in the Written Mode

Personal Key:

Employs private language

Words and tone of writings are easy and natural

Language is personally directed, personal word association

Sentences are loose and have simple constructions

Shortened sentence patterns are frequently used

Informal Key:

Contractions such as don't, it's, I'll and idioms are often found and acceptable

Vocabulary is everyday speech, words are shorter more direct, and less exacting than in Formal Key

Sentences are shorter and more direct

Sentence fragments, loose sentences with less complex construction are used

Slang is used

Informality in a sense is basically well-spoken

Language is transferred to paper using minimum standards for written conventions.

Semiformal Key:

This key is mixture or compromise of informal and formal writing characteristics

Less contractions than Informal

Seldom see sentence fragments

Some use of run-ons with "and"

Clause connections are generally simple

Frequent use of "and"

Lack of long span integration in sentence construction

Formal Key:

Advanced careful planning (literary English) of sentence structure

Contractions and abbreviations are very infrequent

Sentences are marked according to standard usage rules

Complex and varied sentence constructions

Sentences more sharply defined unit, long and complex

Less frequent run-ons than Semiformal or Informal

Vocabulary is extensive and sophisticated

A stock of synonyms

Belletristic Key: Hyperformal writing, all the standards of Formal but even more precision, exactness, and form

Elaborate syntax patterns

Varied vocabulary (large stock of synonyms)

Precise diction

Contractions and abbreviations are off limits

High degree of uniformity in spelling and punctuation

Semicolon is used frequently

Structure planned over an extensive time span

Intricately related sequences of sentences

The three central keys of deliberative, consultative, and casual in the spoken mode, and that of formal, semiformal, and informal keys in the written mode, are important categories in the curriculum of a composition program. High school and college composition courses have for too long given rules for English as if there existed only one key in the English language and it in the written mode. Handbooks like Warriner's not only restrict their description to the characteristics of the formal written key, but also fail to mention other keys and the

whole realm of the relationship of the written mode to the spoken mode.

In order for students to effectively "translect" from the spoken dialect (usually the casual key) to the written dialect, (usually the semiformal or formal), both students and teacher must know more about the territory the student is heading for as well as the place he or she is coming from. Because the students are quite fluent orally, teachers too many times assume that it is just a matter of writing down what one says in the manner in which one says it. Unfortunately, this advice has proven disastrous to a number of students, especially non-mainstream students.

Students have had little experience in speaking in the deliberative key. This is the spoken key most closely associated with the formal key that is too often required in assigned written compositions. Students communicating in the spoken mode have always relied on feedback from the hearer. In the written keys they are deprived of this immediate feedback. Students thus need a great many opportunities to practice expressing themselves, both in writing and speaking. Characteristics of modes and keys, and reasons for these features become apparent only when functionally contrasted.

As teachers we should be constantly aware of this speech-writing relationship. As Vygotsky states: "Written speech is a separate linguistic function differing from oral speech in both structure and mode of functioning. Even its (writing) minimal development requires a high level of abstraction." (1962, p. 88). David Olson (1977) in discussing modes also gives a number of beneficial insights into the complexity of similarities and differences between what he calls

"utterance" and "text."

The Language Variation Model provides a beginning framework for teacher and students to pursue the problem by generating and discovering the appropriate components and correlations of each feature through their own readings and writing.

4. Functions of Discourse

The functions of discourse are concerned with the effects that people set out to achieve in language. John Holloway is quoted in Britton (1975, p. 74) as cataloguing a number of the purposes served by language.

- to influence the actions or feelings or beliefs of others
- to influence our own feelings or beliefs
- to avoid awkward silences
- to pose questions, make promises, requests, bids, surrenders, bets
- to count and calculate
- to avoid or deflect questions
- to deceive and to silence those who contradict us
- to enter pleas, give testimony, make confessions, take oaths
- to pray, to give thanks, to remit sins
- to give commands, warnings, instructions, make requests, wishes
- to cause another to visualize our own states of being
- to draw attention to gestures or our own location in space
- to construct verbal complexes like poems, which conform to certain artistic requirements.

The aim of function in the LVM is basically to answer the same question that Britton asks: "Why are you writing (speaking)?"

The functions of written discourse have since classical times been discussed in terms of four categories: narrative, description, exposition, and argument. Modern researchers (Emig, 1971) (Britton, 1975) and rhetoricians (Winterowd, 1975) have concluded that the time-honored categories will no longer serve as a conceptual framework for the study of writing. Britton points out that most of the classical terms are derived from examples of products rather than

examination of process. This results in the emphasis on how people should write rather than how they actually do it. In addition the terms are seen only in relation to the intended effect upon the audience yet the intention of a narrative is not the same as the intention of persuasion or exposition. For these reasons and a number of others, the modern approach to function has departed from the four original categories.

Janet Emig (1971) proposes that students' modes of writing fall into two categories "reflexive" and "extensive". Emig believes that expressive writing is psychologically prior to the two latter categories. The reflexive is basically on a contemplative role -- making meaning for oneself; it asks: "What does this experience mean to me?" and the extensive is a more active role -- making meaning for others: "How, because of this experience, do I interact with my environment?"

Britton (1975) on the other hand, divides his function categories into transactional, expressive, and poetic. Again, as in Emig, expressive is the middle concept with transactional and poetic stemming from it. Britton's work focuses more on the relation of function to audience and also upon the degree of writer involvement -- writer perceived as either spectator or participant. His definitions reflect this focus. Expressive function is the writer's use of language which relies upon a reader's interest in the writer and in what the writer has to say. Poetic is writing as verbal construct, a patterned verbalization of the writer's feelings and ideas. Transactional or communicative is the use of language in which the prime intention of the writer is to pass on information, opinion,

instruction, and so forth to the reader.

Several other models are worth looking at in terms of function. Kinneavy (1971) has a four part model and there is Jakobson's six part model (1960). The model that seems to suit the LVM most effectively, especially for use in teaching, is the model developed by Lloyd-Jones (1977, p. 39). While it is closely related to the concepts of Britton and Emig as well as having its foundation in communication theory, the Lloyd-Jones model has the advantage of illustrating clearly the concept of a continuum.

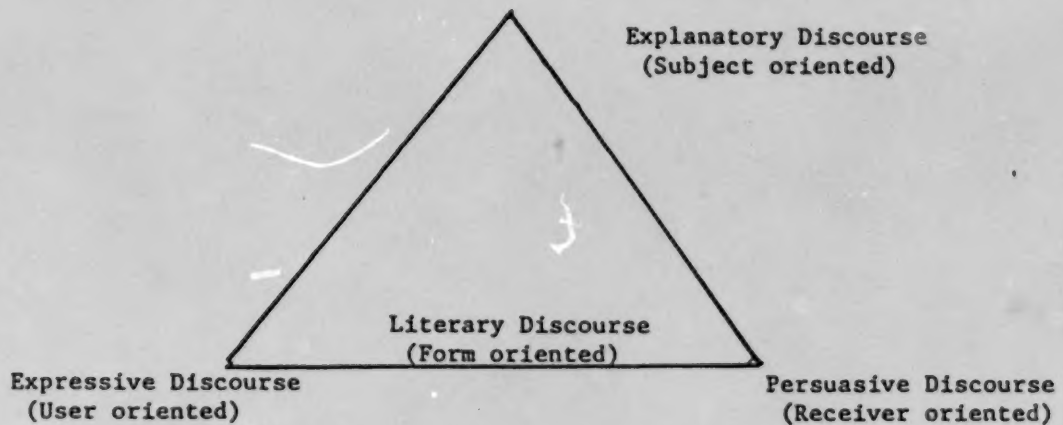


Figure 3 Functions of Discourse

Lloyd-Jones explains that the "sharp categories of the model must be blurred into continua, a kind of tri-polar surface upon which to locate the primary rhetorical and verbal traits associated with t

function. (1977 p. 39) It is true that motives are rarely pure and in writing. Thus the category of explanatory often overlaps with those of persuasive and expressive discourse. In the same manner, the latter categories may overlap one another as well as with explanation.

Lloyd-Jones goes on to make the point that persuasive writing is audience oriented and therefore concerned with aspects of classical rhetoric, yet one of the traditional appeals is to categorize, organize, and give evidence -- all significant factors in writing explanatory discourse. Persuasive that is more dependent on "ethos" and expression of the character would be located more toward the expressive point of the triangle as it would be more concerned with devices suggesting the persona of the writer. Students are encouraged to draw a triangle on their essays and place X on the continuum to illustrate dominant and secondary functions.

5. Receivers of Discourse

Although much more investigation is needed in terms of receivers of the spoken keys, Joos does provide "audiences" in general terms for his five styles shown under Spoken Keys in the outline previously discussed. Also mentioned before is Labov (1966) and his work with "casual" and "careful" speech in contrast to spontaneous speech. He views these in relation to the formality of the context such as reading aloud, interview, subways, family, etc. This data provides further information for the study of user and user's use of language in the Spoken Mode. Giles and Powesland (1975) review research on the influence of the receiver in terms of adjustment to the receiver's age, sex, race, knowledge, and status.

In addition to what has been mentioned under Social Dialect, and in keeping with Britton's audience categories, a scale of shared communicator/receiver experiences and attitudes might be constructed thusly:

SPOKEN MODE

1. Well known audience -- small, familiar
2. Well known audience -- larger and less familiar
3. Known audience -- large, shared values
4. Unknown audience -- small, questionable shared values
5. Unknown audience -- large, questionable shared values

In terms of audience categories, especially in light of composition in the classroom, Britton's study (1975) should prove very helpful and interesting when correlative patternings are found. Britton's model categories are built on the actual composing processes and products of thousands of students. However, Britton's model is designed more for the observation and analysis of the writing process and does not always consider fully the demands of the subject, nor the demands of information processing. In any case, Britton gives the following audience categories: self, teacher, wider audience (known), unknown audience, and two additional categories: virtual named audience, and no discernible audience.

WRITTEN MODE

1. Self - defined as writing from one's own point of view without considering the intelligibility to others of that point of view. "Written form of speech for oneself."
2. Teacher
 - a. Trusted adult - writing directed to a person who wants to hear anything writer says

- b. Teacher-Learner - writing for specifically educational adult as a part of an on-going interaction and in expectation of a response rather than a formal evaluation.
 - c. Particular Relationships - writing for teacher who is both professional and personal in sharing interest.
 - d. Examiner - writing for educational person not for interaction but with expectation of assessment
3. Wider Audience (Known)
- a. Expert to known laymen
 - b. Student to peer group
 - c. Group member to working group
4. Names Audience - written to teacher-named audience
5. No Discernible Audience

To Britton the sense of audience is "revealed by the manner in which the writer expresses a relationship with the reader in respect to the writer's undertaking" (1975, p.14). Britton's research reveals that up to 90% of writing done in the British schools is in the transactional function with a dominance of teacher audience, especially in that of teacher as examiner.

The implications here are that if students are to have a grasp of the full scope of "sense of audience," they must have plenty of opportunity to write to varying audiences with varying functions in mind. In an attempt to vary audience from teacher as examiner, then an emphasis must be placed on process, on interacting rather than judging. Small group work as advocated by Hawkins (1976), Macrorie (1975) would certainly tend to activate the Wider Audience (Known) category. Teachers who are not at ease on the "trusted level" could certainly work at achieving the two intermediate levels between

"trusted" and "examiner." Teachers and students should both be aware of the whole range of audiences and the implications for the effective and appropriate choice of key.

III. Process

The Language Variation Model now consists of the schema and the related taxonomy. The model should not, however, be just taxonomic. It should also be generative, and capable of helping teacher and students go "beyond the information given" to the discovery of new insights into the language and composing process. It should generate questions about language variation and communication. As the philosophers have said, one first must know what questions to ask before one can expect any answers.

The relationship between categories and features have been called here "correlative patterning." In working with these connections it is well to keep in mind the concept of a continuum of frequency rather than just occurrence versus non-occurrence. It is important that teacher and students generate their own correlative patternings and then modify the features of both dimensions, especially concerning key, function, and receiver correlations as these three features can and do vary so much for any given instructor and student body in any given class.

Many dimensions need considerable descriptive work, while others like the written keys are left open because only the particular objectives or analysis of a specific piece of writing will yield the related, appropriate descriptions. The process of correlative patterning should reveal much to the investigators not only in light

of direct linguistic relationships but also in terms of cause-effect factors in language.

Once the triangular framework (Figure 1) is explored in terms of the correlative patterning, then the factors can be combined into ratios, and students and teacher can begin to work back to the holistic view of the piece that is often so unmanageable at first. The concepts of idiolect, style, and register thus become much more meaningful.

IV. Implications and Applications

The question largely remains as to the actual use of the LVM in the classroom, especially concerning composition. It is proposed that LVM can bring to the instructor's attention the need for further work on varying function and audience in the assignments of writing and/or speaking. Britton's (1975) research although done in England, appears to hold true as well for students in the United States, in that much of the writing done in high school and the first year of college, no matter the discipline, tends to be transactional writing and written for an "examiner" in expectation of "the grade." With the conclusion from Emig and Britton that expressive writing is the first stage in any worthwhile writing and that it is the language the writer uses to internalize thought as well as to discover what he/she thinks, instructors must as a result provide more opportunity for this function of writing at all levels. It is especially important at the conception/incubation stage of each piece of writing. Teachers will certainly have to accept and encourage more writing in the expressive mode and related keys for this is the initial stage through which

discovery and creativity often emerge and develop.

In addition to such rhetorical and creative considerations, the LVM should help expose other dialectal features especially in regard to those implications for open admission colleges. The LVM can create not only an awareness of the relationship of non-standard English to non-mainstream environment but also to the complex relationship of spoken to written modes when this is amplified by student inexperience in the latter. In addition the use of the LVM should encourage tolerance, understanding, and appreciation of the various dialects found in our American heritage.

One of Britton's conclusions states that much more work must be done in the study of how students develop a sense of the conventions governing the use of writing. Somewhere along the line, he continues, students do grasp in varying degrees the notion that differing forms of the written and spoken language serve differing purposes. The LVM is designed to help the teacher and student acquire more explicit knowledge of these distinctions and relationships through working with correlation of keys, modes, functions, and receivers, as well as keeping in mind the user and his or her dialectal features. This knowledge cannot help but to increase awareness and build confidence in the student's ability to use language effectively.

More attention is needed to the concept of key or code-switching. Students appear to have well established expectations with respect to switching keys as readily observed both in and out of the classroom as well as in recent research reviewed by Giles and Powesland (1975); however, while the importance of this key switching may be the topic of articles in professional journals, precious little, it appears,

finds its way to the actual classroom. It is too significant a factor not to discuss its ramifications with students within the classroom. The students "know" the concept, but need experience in activating it on a more explicit level of consciousness.

As mentioned previously, the model should be more than taxonomic; it should be generative as well. In practical application, the LVM could be used as a prewriting heuristic: What might be the effect of using certain keys with certain audiences? What might be effect of using technical versus non-technical register with a certain audience? How many keys can one "mix" before code interferes with meaning? What might be the effect or need of using regional, temporal-spatial dialects with certain audiences for certain purposes?

Some of these last questions reveal the potential of the LVM as a tool for a prereading activity as well as being a possible checklist for assessing the finished writing product. Two examples of the LVM in action are included in Appendix B and Appendix C of this study. The first paper is an analysis of the language variation found in J.D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye -- the opening paragraph. This study applies the LVM to the written mode. In contrast, the second study, analyzes the spoken mode of the language variation as contained in John F. Kennedy's 1961 Inaugural Speech. The first study connects the nodes of the schema across the triangle, whereas the second study connects the nodes along the perimeters of the triangle. Not all categories generate specific examples, which is part of the fascination that the LVM has for investigators. But the categories which do "light up" provide a rich insight into the writer/speaker and the language variation employed therein.

In sum, the Language Variation Model with its taxonomic and generative components is an attempt to map out from a distance the linguistic territory to be explored. The interrelationship of dialectal and discourse features as revealed in actual pieces of language, spoken or written, generates the correlative patterning. This process should enable the investigator to achieve new insights and new strategies in both reading and writing. The LVM is the map upon which to plot the frequencies of the varieties and dimensions of language use we find in everyday life as well as in the more formal communication situations in the classroom. As a pedagogical model in the composition class, the Language Variation Model provides the topographical outline, but leaves the rest "terra incognita" waiting for teacher and student exploration and discovery.

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Appendix A Chart of Spoken Keys

	Speaker	Audience/ Situation	Amt. of Background or Public Info.	Planning Required	Grammar	Feedback/ Participation
ORATORICAL ¹	Lawyer, preacher, Pro. orator, Speaker controls info. & Aud. Formal stance/ attitude	Large Aud. Social strangers Never one person (unless speaker is a complete social bore!)	A great amount Speaker supplies all Info. part of text	Mandatory A great amount Striving for perfection in structure & content/present- ation.	Formal Planned Elaborate Correct No ellipsis No slang No jargon Intonation stilted	None
DELIBERATIVE ²	Toastmaster, Professor, After dinner Speaker, lecturer Speaker detached, Some formality	Med.-Large Aud. Group of 6 or more one person (implies distance either in status or social position.) Audience only hears info. once.	A great amount Speaker supplies all Info. woven into text	Yes Structure Purpose Content, para- graphs, transitions "Deliberate" in pronunciation, vocabulary, varied sentences	Less formal than Oratorical Correct No ellipsis No slang Intonation formal Diction, selective	None
CONSULTATIVE	Non-specific Somewhat relax'd Little formality	Small group Chance acquaintances Strangers with a different info. stk. One person (to establish or determine relation- ship.)	Inserted as needed Speaker supplies most Speaker responds to Aud. Creates/Confirms shared knowledge	Little or None Info. adjusted in response to Aud.	Loose construction Can change mid- sentence "telescoping" run-on sentences No long span inte- gration Intonation +	Necessary Speaker adjusts idea rate & info. to Aud. respn Aud. parti- cipates continuously
CASUAL	Non-specific Relaxed No formality	Small in-group Friends, insiders, Acquaintances, One person Well-established re- lationship	Unnecessary Very little, if any	None	Of little concern Ellipsis Slang Intonation+	Complete rapport None needed
INTIMATE	Non-specific Very relaxed No formality	One person Family, spouse lover	None	None	No concern Extraction Jargon Intonation+	Personal rapport None needed Touching

*Joos entitles these "frozen" and "formal" respectively.

Sources: 1-H.A. Gleason, "Language Variation," *Language: Introductory Readings*, Third Ed. (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1981), pp. 425-435.
2-Martin Joos, "The Styles of the Five Clocks," *Language: Introductory Readings*, 2nd Ed., (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1977), pp. 408-415.

APPENDIX B - Application of the LVM
to the opening paragraph of J.D. Salinger's
THE CATCHER IN THE RYE

INTRODUCTION

This paper is written for the English teacher to use in the classroom in order to apply the Language Variation Model to a specific piece of discourse. Within the content of this paper, it is assumed that the students and teacher will already be familiar with the LVM terminology, definitions, and the taxonomy. The question and answer format proposes to help both teacher and student discover within a piece of discourse how each aspect of the dialectal features relates to each category of the discourse features.

By analyzing the interrelationship among the various features, the investigator can better understand how an author/speaker selects those aspects of language variation in keeping with the intended purpose and audience. As a result, of this increased awareness of language variation, teacher and student should be able to incorporate the principles of language variation for themselves within the composing process as well as the reading process. This continued linguistic practice and realization can not fail to improve both the process and the product.

The following passage is the opening paragraph of the novel, The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger. In this book, the main character, Holden Caulfield, shares with the reader, his various problems and experiences of a seventeen year old prep school student who is growing up during the 1950's.

If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth. In the first place, that stuff bores me, and in the second place, my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece if I told anything pretty personal about them. They're quite touchy about anything like that especially my father. They're nice and all -- I'm not saying that -- but they're also touchy as hell. Besides, I'm not going to tell you my whole goddam autobiography or anything. I'll just tell you about this madman stuff that happened to me around last Christmas just before I got pretty run-down and had to come out here and take it easy. I mean that's all I told D. B. about, and he's my brother and all. He's in Hollywood. That isn't too far from this crummy place, and he comes over and visits me practically every weekend. He's going to drive me home when I go home next month maybe. He just got a Jaguar. One of those little English jobs that can do around two hundred miles per hour. It cost him damn near four thousand bucks. He's got a lot of dough, now. He didn't use to. He used to be just a regular writer, when he was home. He wrote this terrific book of short stories, The Secret Goldfish, in case you never heard of him. The best one in it was "The Secret Goldfish." I was about this little kid that wouldn't let anybody look at his goldfish because he'd bought it with his own money. It killed me. Now he's out in Hollywood, D.B., being a prostitute. If there's one thing I hate, it's the movies. Don't even mention them to me.

(Salinger, 1951, p. 1-2.)

Although J.D. Salinger is the actual author of this passage (and novel), the language variation is filtered through the character of Holden Caulfield. Salinger skillfully uses specific linguistic choices to create this fictional "person." Because the author "knows" his character so well, Salinger is able to choose aspects of

Caulfield's language so as to create a believable, realistic character. Therefore, the reader in analyzing the language variation of this passage is actually observing the linguistics of Holden Caulfield, and not Salinger directly. It is Caulfield's personal history, background, and experience which Salinger has invented which contributes to the language variation found in Caulfield's personal dialect or idiolect. Idiolect is that combination of features that makes an individual's language "unique as a fingerprint."

DIALECTAL FEATURES & DISCOURSE FEATURES

A. IDIOLECT

Q: What aspects of idiolect are evident in this passage?

Using the components from the taxonomy, the reader is looking for those aspects of idiolect designated as: favored vocabulary, phrases, and/or the syntactic structures which characterize this language as unique to Holden Caulfield. As the main "speaker" of the passage (it is written from the first person singular point of view), Caulfield uses as favored vocabulary many one-syllable words such as: hear, from, first, thing, you, all, want, know, etc. A majority of his word choices are of Anglo-Saxon origin, evident in the monosyllabic predominance of this passage. In fact, 71% of the words in this opening paragraph are of one syllable. Caulfield does not display an overly complicated nor extensive vocabulary.

This lack of sophistication in language is further reinforced by Caulfield's sentence structure. Note the first compound sentence in the passage which consists of a Subject-Verb-Complement construction linked by simple conjunctions; and, but, if. This long run-on sentence contains eighteen contractions, seven clauses, and seven

conjunctions. The subsequent two sentences are constructed similarly: S-V-C and S-V-C + Conj. + S-V-C.

Another aspect which displays the character's age and attitude, are the colloquial phrases and slang he employs, which are characteristic of his youth and rebelliousness. These phrases include: "Touchy as hell," "crumby place," "damn near," "a lot of dough," "this little kid," "can do around two hundred miles per hour," "goddam" "take it easy," and "pretty run-down." Caulfield's verbal pauses are shown in "and all" and the end of many of his sentences, and "if you really want to know...." Caulfield is basically not an articulate person in that he uses "got as an all purpose verb -- "got a lot," "I got pretty run-down," and "he just got a Jaguar."

Donald P. Costello in his study on the language of Catcher in the Rye, analyzes Holden's phrasing as follows:

There are two major speech habits which are Holden's own, which are endlessly repeated throughout the book, and which are nevertheless, typical enough of teenage speech so that Holden can be both typical and individual in his use of them. It is certainly common for them to add an insistent "I really did," "It really was." But Holden uses these phrases to such an overpowering degree that they become a clear part of the flavor of the book; they become, more, a part of Holden himself, and actually help to characterize him. (Costello, 1959, p. 432.)

Another interesting element in this passage is the phonemic quality of the word choices. Notice the number of words containing the letters, t,b,d, and b; for example: "second place my parents would have about two hemorrhages apiece," "pretty personal," "goddam," "madman stuff." The sounds of these three consonants /p/, /b/, /t/, and /d/ give the language of the character an emphasis in delivery which helps to convey (and in this opening paragraph, introduce) the

person of Holden Caulfield. This language embodies his youth, brashness, his feelings of hostility, and his personal conversational style. Through these phonemes the pattern or rhythm of Caulfield's speech is revealed. One can almost imagine his speed of delivery in his quick-paced, impatient cadence which appears to be true as to how an adolescent would actually speak. Salinger deliberately utilizes these linguistic elements to create Caulfield's idiolect and to make the character "come alive."

1. Idiolect & Field of Discourse

Q: How does idiolect relate to the field of discourse specifically in regard to this passage?

The language level selected by Salinger for Caulfield is of a non-technical nature. This is shown through the grammar and vocabulary the character uses. For example: "He didn't us to." "He go" "I got ...run-down" etc. Grammatically, "got" as an all purpose verb or "to" at the end of a sentence is not acceptable standard English grammar. Typical of Caulfield's immaturity and teen-age vernacular are his phrases "touchy as hell," "madman stuff," "They're nice and all." His use of expletives as modifiers show a lack of articulateness on behalf of the character's language level.

2. Idiolect & Mode of Discourse

Q: How does idiolect influence mode of discourse?

Because of the conversational tone of this passage, the idiolect is categorized as casual in style. The reader can read this selection out loud and hear the "spoken" aspects of this passage easily, (rhythm, simple vocabulary, simple sentence construction -- all of which are easily delivered orally.) If this were indeed intended to

be a spoken passage one could classify it as a monologue because of its first person, singular, narrative point of view. However, this is a piece of written discourse and therefore falls under the written mode -- "written to be read as if heard."

3. Idiolect & Keys of Discourse

Q: In regard to keys of discourse, how does idiolect affect the language in this passage?

Since this passage is written literature, it belongs in the written category and displays those characteristics of the informal key. The "everyday" language aspects help to determine its classification as such. Markers of this key include an abundance of contractions (a total of 18 in this passage), the use of the familiar "you," "you know" to address the audience, and the opening run-on sentence. In addition, the language contains slang and expletives (goddam, lousy, crap, dough, stuff, etc.) which again gives evidence to this passage being in the informal key.

Through skillfully writing in this informal key, Salinger creates an informal character who, in turn, establishes an informal relationship with the reader. In a critical commentary, Charlotte Alexander writes that the use of this informal key contributes to developing the character of Caulfield.

The colloquial and slang language serves to heighten the characterization of Holden Caulfield as well as control the pace of the novel. Holden's off-hand speech...demonstrates his inarticulate yet rebellious personality. He uses the same word (often throughout the novel) in many different contexts. (Alexander, 1977, p. 68.)

The fact that Caulfield uses words interchangeably throughout the novel also shows the constant casual style of his language variation.

4. Idiolect & Function of Discourse

Q: What is the function of this discourse specifically considering the aspects of idiolect?

The character, Holden Caulfield, is trying to express himself and at the same time make contact with the audience in order to form an understanding, communicating (although one-sided) relationship. The language displays this in the appearance of the familiar pronoun "you" in the passage. At the same time, Caulfield tries to maintain a tough facade through his word choices and conditionalizes many of his statements. For instance, he says "if you really want to know...", or, "if you really want to hear...", or, "I'm not going to tell you my whole goddam autobiography." Caulfield controls the content of the conversation and will relate what information he chooses to the reader.

Therefore, it appears that Salinger's purpose for writing this novel is to have the character express his feelings, expose his thoughts, and emotions to make an empathetic connection between Holden Caulfield and the reader; consequently, the reader understands not only the character but the story as well.

5. Idiolect & the Receiver of Discourse

Q: Who is the receiver of this discourse and how does idiolect affect this aspect of the language variation?

From the language of this passage, one might consider that Salinger wrote this novel as an adult writing to a member of his peer

group -- another adult. However, with the passing of almost three decades, one can today surmise that this language could be an adult writing to not only another adult, but also to another seventeen year old. The content and vocabulary in this day and age of permissiveness is not inappropriate for young people to be reading. Since the novel is about a teen-ager's "coming of age" in our society, its content appeals both to adolescents and adults. So, that if Salinger's original intention was to reach the adult audience, he has also, perhaps unintentionally, reached the young people of the 1980's as well. The language of the passage, as mentioned previously, has the quality of the character actually speaking to the reader, so that a one-to-one relationship is created. Thus, the reader is treated as a personal, individual audience for this piece of discourse.

B. TEMPORAL-SPATIAL ASPECTS

Q: What features of temporal-spatial elements are evident in this passage and how do they relate to each of the language variation categories?

The category of temporal-spatial involves those influences of generation, age, grade, and location as they affect idiolect and the other aspects of the language. Salinger has created the character of Holden Caulfield using the teen-age generation of 1951, and determined the character's age to be seventeen years old. Caulfield is a senior at a Pennsylvania preparatory school.

Some of the markers in this paragraph indicating these temporal-spatial characteristics may be seen in the reference Caulfield makes to his brother's car. The car is a Jaguar which costs "almos \$4000." This certainly dates this passage for the reader

today, because in 1982, a Jaguar would cost over \$40,000! Caulfield also comments that the car can go almost 200 miles per hour. Again, in today's world, cars are not only not built to go that fast, but the speed limit is now legally 55 and not 75+ as it was in the 1950's. These allusions then are indicators of the time in which the story takes place. In addition, some of Caulfield's expressions determine his "era." In terms of teen-agers today (1982) some of the expressions Caulfield uses might translate as follows:

Original 1951

parents have two hemorrhages
madman stuff
English jobs
lot of dough
It killed me

Today 1982

parents would croak
outrageous things
foreign number
big bucks/megabucks
It was excellent

Other examples could be translated accordingly to the current slang. So, in sum, the language, even in slang, can reveal the temporal-spatial setting in which Holden Caulfield exists.

1. Temporal-Spatial & Field of Discourse

Q. How do temporal-spatial factors help determine the field of discourse for this passage?

The language in this passage is non-technical. The slang and jargon used is typical of a Northeastern Prep (Costello, 1959.) school language variation. Therefore, it is not composed in any particular technical register. This category does not significantly influence the choice of language in this piece.

Q. In regard to mode of discourse, how does temporal-spatial affect the content of this paragraph?

As discussed earlier in the paper, the passage is "written to be read as if heard." The vocabulary, and the rhythm of the language indicate the informal nature and youthfulness of Caulfield, who is the user of the language. It does not appear that temporal-spatial factors affect the informality of this passage, although some of the expressions are dated. (See section B previous page.)

Q. In what way does the temporal-spatial aspect relate to the key of discourse?

Temporal-spatial factors do not seem to be pertinent here in that the language employed in this passage is informal in nature and does not rely on temporal-spatial influences for its being in this key. The language is surely representative of the informal contemporary language, as opposed to being written in an eighteenth century conversational style. In that respect, then, temporal-spatial is reflected.

Q. Is the function of the discourse influenced by the category of temporal-spatial?

Yes, the function of discourse is influenced by the aspects of temporal-spatial because this passage is the communication of a contemporary youth who is expressing himself freely, and bluntly at times. Salinger, although he may have shocked society with his explicitness in 1951, was allowed to publish in this style, and in this language variation. This novel also has (still) an acceptance in most contemporary literary circles and with most readers. Although there are still today some people and places who regard this novel as

sordid, a majority of the population could accept the content of this novel without a blush!

The function of this passage (and the novel itself) reflects the character expressing himself uninhibitedly. This is made possible because of the time and space in which the novel was written -- the modern times -- and in turn, it appeals to the modern audience.

2. Temporal-Spatial & Receivers of Discourse

Q. How does temporal-spatial affect the receivers of the discourse?

The language in this passage is contemporary and therefore, should appeal to the modern reader. The novel's universality in content gives it a wide audience range from young adult readers to adults as well. In contrast, this novel would not be appropriate reading for the teen-ager of the early 1800's because of its explicit language.

C. REGIONAL ASPECTS

Q: What part does the regional influence play on the language of this passage?

The regional factor can play a big part in the development of an individual's spoken idiolect, however, in this particular passage, the pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax, and idioms which appear do not seem to indicate any specific regionality. Although Costello identifies this language as being typical of the Northeastern prep school, educated vernacular, (Costello, 1959), there is not an abundance of regional idioms. The language here is more a language of education and generation rather than a particular region. The language is also in standard English, and does not deviate into sub-standard construction at any time.

1. Regional & Discourse Features

Q. Does the regional factor influence field of discourse, mode, key and/or the receivers of discourse?

The regional aspects of this passage do not seem to be an influential factor in the language variation used in these discourse features. Because Salinger intended this novel to have a universal appeal, it seems that he deliberately wrote to avoid any specific regionality of language. Therefore, the regional factors have minimal effect on the field of discourse, mode of discourse, key of discourse, nor the receivers. Another important observation is that as a rule, the more educated an individual is, the less regionality is apparent in one's dialect. (Gregory 1967)

D. SOCIAL ASPECTS

Q: How do the social classifications influence the language variation as contained in this passage?

The social category of the idiolect takes into consideration those aspects of education, intelligibility, class, adjustment to receiver, and environment. To overview, this section, the character of Holden Caulfield as the narrator of the story, has a social background of private secondary school education, and throughout the novel, Caulfield disclaims his lack of need for "middle class materialism." He implies that he is developing his sense of "transcendent values" instead. Caulfield's constant interjection of expletives does not reveal his lack of class as this might in some cases, but rather these strong adjectives reveal his youth and his experimentation at being an "adult." Holden communicates using basically standard English, although his use of slang and colloquialisms might be classified as

being non-standard at times. Overall, he is consistent with standard usage.

As for adjustment to receiver in the language of this paragraph, one must consider how the writer/speaker adapts the language to be able to communicate to a specific receiver. Status, knowledge, age, sex, and the social situation of the receiver, influence this aspect of the language variation.

The question in this instance then might be -- How does Salinger take the receiver into account in writing Caulfield's message to the audience? Salinger wants to communicate one adolescent's struggle with growing up, and he selects the character of Holden Caulfield through which to express these intense feelings, thoughts, and emotions. As expressed through the sensory perception of an adolescent character, the message contains a realistic feeling and tone, which subsequently, touches the reader more deeply than the message might do otherwise if it were related from the point of view, for instance, of Caulfield's father. Because Salinger understands his character and in turn understands the audience to whom he is writing, he creates not only a realistic character, but one with an empathetic message as well -- "growing up is difficult." The feelings are real for the character and hopefully will strike similar, real feelings in the reader's response.

On the other hand, it appears that the reader needs also to adjust himself to the content of this novel. Holden would tell his story his way regardless of who was reading it. Through this informal situation as created by the language, the reader receives the content on a one-to-one basis. The reader is the one who has to adjust to the

content of the text, because he is the one who has to read the biases of Caulfield and judge the "real" meanings behind his statements. It might be feasible to conclude that in the case of Holden Caulfield's language variation, that Salinger intends for the audience to adjust its status, age, sex, knowledge and social situation to accommodate the language variation of Caulfield, and thereby, elicits a greater audience response.

1. Social & Field Discourse

Q. How do the social aspects of this passage contribute to the field of discourse?

The non-technical language used by Caulfield is characteristic of the language typically spoken by the contemporary social group called, "teen-agers." This language is evident in the character's use of slang, and expletives. In addition, the syntax and lexicon of this character reflect his youth and attitude as influenced by his society. (See discussion in idiolect & field of discourse)

2. Social & Mode of Discourse

Q. How do the social factors influence the mode of discourse?

The passage is in the written mode, although it has the linguistic quality of resembling "conversation." The language is like a monologue in its being written from the first person singular, narrative point of view. This style and manner of language lend to the character of Caulfield his unique speech pattern or idiolect. As a result, Salinger uses this mode -- written to be read as if heard -- effectively to convey the casual, defiant speech of an adolescent growing up in modern society.

3. Social & Key Discourse

Q. Which social factors affect the key of discourse in this passage?

The written informality of this piece of discourse displays a somewhat casual social relationship between the writer/character and reader. Reading the passage aloud helps one to hear this aspect of the passage. The slang contributes to create the overall discontented attitude of Caulfield's character, whereas the use of "you" helps the reader feel that the character is talking directly to him. The discourse is not in a personal key, however, because of the lack of private language employed, but it does display the use of contractions, slang, and simple sentence construction typical of the informal key. (See IDIOLECT + KEYS OF DISCOURSE)

4. Social & Function of Discourse

Q. How do the social factors contribute to the function of the discourse?

Salinger expresses himself through the character of Holden Caulfield in order to share with the reader the hardships of growing up in an often lonely, difficult world of contemporary society, where the emergence of an adult from adolescence can be an emotionally and psychologically wrenching experience. Through making contact with the reader, Holden Caulfield (and Salinger) shares feelings, thoughts, emotions, and experiences and therefore, help the reader not only to understand the literary character, but also to better understand how the reader himself developed and "survived" his own "coming of age" in modern society. The author hopes to touch and share a special insight about "growing up" with the reader.

5. Social & Receivers of Discourse

Q. In what ways do the social characteristics of the language affect the receivers?

If the reader considers that this passage (and the novel) is being related from a teen-ager's point of view (See *Idiolect + Receivers of Discourse*) to another teen-ager, then the social characteristics of Caulfield's speaking in "teen terms" reflects this social influence; however, if on the other hand, one considers that Salinger wrote this novel in 1951, as an adult writing to and for a predominantly adult audience, then one must conclude that Salinger was writing to a large, "known" audience -- as one former adolescent to other former adolescents. This premise of "everyone has been there" helps maintain the universal appeal of the novel.

Charlotte Alexander (1965) writes in regard to the adult attitude toward the purpose of this novel:

If adult society cannot identify with the struggles of the young attempting to reach maturity, then adult society has no hope of maintaining a position of leadership. Without leadership, institutions would no longer give direction but merely propagandize. Social progress and communication is a two-way street which demands that the young understands the old and vice versa. (Alexander, 1977, p. 65.)

SUMMARY

Salinger through his character of Holden Caulfield develops a language variation typical of a contemporary, discontent, seventeen year old, upper middle class boy, who is being educated in an Eastern (Pennsylvania) preparatory school. Because all of the information within the passage is communicated from Caulfield's point of view, the reader must become involved in the language of the character to be

able to evaluate how the message is being presented through "adolescent eyes." Through understanding the background of the character, the reader can better analyze the "why" of Caulfield's actions and feelings.

Salinger must have consciously been aware of and deliberately selected many of the language variation factors in creating the language and personality of his character, because Holden Caulfield is realistic. Caulfield's invented idiolect with its temporal-spatial, regional, social, and adjustment to receiver adaptations are all combined skillfully into the appropriate field, mode, key and function of this literature to best express the inner thoughts, feelings, and emotions of one Holden Caulfield, and these are willingly shared with the reader/receiver. Through this unique combination, the writer, character, literature and the reader "connect" and the communication is complete. The reader here, consequently, comes to understand more fully one adolescent's development into the responsibilities of adulthood and therefore, can achieve a better insight into himself and others.

CONCLUSION

The language variation model with its taxonomy and schema can provide a most useful classroom tool for analyzing and exploring the linguistic components within a specific piece of discourse. The categories may also act as a heuristic to help the reader explore the subject. In any case, as each category in the dialectal features is activated and related to each of the discourse features, an interrelationship may be realized between the two. An author's deliberate and conscious selection of these particular elements

contribute to his piece of discourse as being unique and achieving its overall intention of communicating effectively "a message" to a chosen audience.

Keeping these factors in mind while writing, a student too may use the Language Variation Model in analyzing his or her own writing. A student may use the model as a heuristic to ask himself: What linguistic choices do I need to make and in what categories in order to best combine my dialectal features to my discourse features so that my composition will result in a meaningful, communication to my intended audience? (An alternative activity would be to divide the class into small groups, assigning each group one category of the dialectal features to correlate with as many discourse features as possible.) Afterwards, the student can go through the model and generate ideas for each correlation of each category. Through learning, studying, and using the Language Variation Model, the student can not only come to appreciate the linguistic clues and construction of the professional writer/speaker, but also the student can more fully develop and improve his own writing process and product.

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APPENDIX C - SPOKEN DISCOURSE

The Inauguration Speech of John F. Kennedy, 1961.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the Inauguration Speech of John F. Kennedy (1961) in terms of Kennedy's dialectal features as writer/speaker, and to relate these factors to the overall construction of the discourse. Especial attention will be paid to those aspects of linguistic style which are carefully selected by the writer/speaker specifically to relate to the intended audience. This relationship will be explored following the taxonomy of the Language Variation Model as developed by Dr. Harold Nugent of Keene State College, Keene, N.H.

Part I DIALECTAL FEATURES - THE USER

The first element to be considered in analyzing the language of the Inauguration Speech of John F. Kennedy is Kennedy's own biographical and experiential background which exerts a definite influence not only on the particular word choices he employs, but also on the manner in which the speech is presented.

Upon listening to a tape recording of Kennedy delivering his speech, one can immediately discern the distinctive rhythm and sound of the Boston dialect. Kennedy is a Boston native, and speaks with the characteristic rounded vowel sound of the phoneme / / in words such as: not, top, and God.¹ Another prominent dialectal feature is Kennedy's pronunciation of the broad "a" phoneme, /2/, as in the words: man, allies, and that. He exhibits the loss of the "r" phoneme in the words: party, more, dare, far, border, and stars; however, he does not omit the "r" in words where the "r" phoneme precedes a vowel -- victory, carry, and very. (Although Kennedy was famous for his intrusive "r," which is also characteristic of the Boston dialect, and

occurs in such words as: Cuba(r), Linda(r), etc., this regional dialectal trait is not evident in this particular tape recording of Kennedy.)²

Professionally, Kennedy was a politician, and his speech is performed with a delivery speed which reflects the style of the polished public speaker or orator -- slow enough to be understood with verbal pauses strategically placed for dramatic impact, and at the same time, rapid enough to retain audience attention and interest. The effectiveness of this speech is further enhanced through Kennedy's vocal quality which not only possesses an intrinsic vitality, but also projects an image of "confidence, energy, and youth,"³ with a pleasingly pitched vocal timbre.

As for Kennedy's favored vocabulary, phrases and syntactical structures, Kennedy creates the "power" of his discourse through the careful selection of each factor. For example, if one were to analyze the vocabulary choices by parts of speech as identified by traditional grammar, one could see readily where the concentration of verbal impact and meaning occurs. The nouns in this case seem to carry the emphasis of the speech. Kennedy has put a high degree of importance in his noun choices.

Similarly, he has intentionally chosen the phonemes in this speech to blend together well in order that the speech may be delivered as Hamlet said, to allow the words to "fall trippingly off the tongue."

To understand better the origin of Kennedy's "linguistic stockpile" and the nature of his idiolect, it is necessary to explore the biographical data from which his characteristic language features evolved.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was born on May 17, 1917, in Brookline, Massachusetts, into a very wealthy, Irish-Catholic family. He was the second oldest of nine children, and was raised in a competitive environment of affluence, athletics, and education. In fact, all of JFK's education occurred under the auspices of private schools, including his college career which took place at Harvard,⁴ (Harvard being classified as one of the "right schools" -- Labov, 1966.)⁵ Graduating cum laude from Harvard in 1940, Kennedy pursued a political career which began officially in 1946 when he was elected to a four year term as a U. S. Representative. In 1952, he was elected to the Senate; and then in 1960, he ran for President of the United States and won for the Democratic Party. During his Presidency, Kennedy became famous for his stand on domestic issues, civil rights, and low cost housing.

However, politics was not the only area in which Kennedy excelled. He was also a competent writer. His college thesis, Why England Slept, an analysis of events leading up to World War I, was published; and later, a second book, Profiles in Courage, published 1956, won the Pulitzer Prize. It is no surprise then that the linguistic construction of this Inaugural Speech is carefully designed from the lexicon to the organization of paragraphs, to the overall impact of this piece of discourse.

The design of the speech accordingly reflects JFK's experiences in life. For example, some of the technical or political words he uses in the speech evoke images of patriotism and nationalism: e.g. freedom, revolutionary, heritage, nation, loyalty, republic, states, liberty, and citizens -- are just a few. Echoing our National Motto,

"in God we trust," Kennedy uses words such as: Almighty God, solemn oath, sovereign states, undo the heavy burden... let the oppressed go free, to give testimony, trumpet summons us, rejoicing in hope, and patient in tribulation, etc. The overall effect as a result is to allude to "one nation under God," the base upon which our country was originally founded. These phrases reflect and support Kennedy's devotion to God and the Country.

Another aspect of the language variation which occurs in Kennedy's word choices is that evidence of military terms. Kennedy skillfully projects himself as the new, strong leader of the country through his military vocabulary. Kennedy's own military career took place in the Navy during World War II, where he was commander of the now famous P.T. 109. Saving the lives of a number of his crew after an enemy attack, Kennedy won a hero's recognition for his bravery.⁶

So as Kennedy draws upon his military experiences in using words of military origin, he, in turn, reflects the military strength of our country. To inspire leadership and confidence, JFK speaks of "victory, beachhead, power, war, tyranny, alliance, subversion, instruments of peace, fighting, shield, destruction, arms, inspection, push(ing) back the jungles, "and both sides." In this manner, Kennedy is winning the confidence and support of his people, and is asserting our military superiority in the world.

Although Kennedy was from the upper class, he has adapted his language in this speech to appeal to a large, diverse audience composed of people from many social classes -- both domestic and foreign. In one sense, he has adjusted his language to be understood by his varied range of constituents who also vary in knowledge, age,

sex, and other life factors; however, this speech was not written, nor was it intended, to personally communicate to the common American citizen, but was composed rather to impress, to assure, and to inspire the common man. This speech reflects not only excellent rhetorical style, but also reveals Kennedy's attention to the politics involved in delivering this speech. A fine public speaker, Kennedy has created a well-organized, purposeful, piece of oratory.

PART II - DISCOURSE FEATURES - The User's Use of Language

The field of discourse for any written or spoken piece applies to the subject and the level of language - either technical or non-technical. In the case of the Kennedy Inauguration Speech, this piece of discourse may be categorized under the domain of oratory, presented in a political, formal register.

The political register of the language used in this speech is not only characterized by the word choices, but also evolves through the careful construction of phrases and syntax. Some of the political word choices have already been discussed previously in this paper; however, some other phrases which reflect this political, formal register are: "for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder," ... "to prevent (the United Nations) from becoming merely a forum for invective...and to enlarge the area in which its writ may run." These phrases are not common to everyday language, but are presented in the special register of the politician/orator who desires to create a powerful, moving, and lasting effect upon the audience.⁷

What, then is oratory? According to research by H. A. Gleason, Jr. and research by Martin Joos in regard to the styles or keys of

language use, oratory is classified as the most formal category of spoken discourse. In oratory, the speaker controls not only all the information imparted to the audience, but he also has complete control over the audience itself. The audience is usually a large, heterogeneous group made up of social strangers, and are to remain as such throughout the discourse delivery.⁸ In this particular instance, the audience is the American Public and many international listeners. In oratory, there is no opportunity for the audience to stop the speaker, neither for clarification of meaning, nor for individual response to the content of the speech. There can be no change of direction in oratory caused by the audience.

Because the text of the speech is planned and fixed in structure with the intent of being delivered as a "whole package" the audience can only respond en masse either to "boo" or "applaud" as their emotions guide them. The audience cannot actively participate in the speech individually. The speech itself will continue in its planned, structured

Another characteristic of oratory, is the stance of the speaker. Here Kennedy takes a formal stance (evident in the video tape of his speech) and maintains a formal attitude throughout his delivery. Kennedy's posture displays a formality as does his vocal intonation, which in turn, partially is caused by the word choice or diction selected to create exactly that effect. There is no casualness, nor familiarity in the language of this speech. There is no evidence of slang nor jargon; nor is there any ellipsis used, because the speech was composed purposefully to be presented formally and to be declaimed by an orator, in this case, the President of the United States at the

formal Inauguration ceremony -- (and that in itself sounds formal.)

By definition then, this piece of discourse is classified as oratory, and Kennedy is truly an orator. According to Webster's Dictionary, an orator is "an eloquent public speaker," and an oration is "a formal speech" presented "as at a ceremony." (See chart next page with description of the five keys/styles of spoken language.) Kennedy and his speech fulfill both definitions completely and superbly.

Some of the specific linguistic features of oratory include a complex structure in sentence formation. In this piece of discourse there is evidence of parallel construction, balance in structure, and repetition. There is also a high degree of organization maintained. To illustrate, excerpts from the speech follow:

PARALLEL STRUCTURE

pay at any price
bear any burden
meet any hardship
support any friend
oppose any foe

PARALLEL STRUCTURE/REPETITION/IMPERATIVES

Let every nation know
Let the word go forth
Let both sides control
Let both sides seek (to invoke)
Let both sides unite (to heed)
Let all our neighbors know

Let every other power know
 To those old allies whose
 To those new states whom
 To those peoples
 To our sister republic
 To that world assembly
 To those nations

These repetitive and parallel constructs not only enhance the flow and delivery of the speech, they also serve to help the audience remember the message the speaker is trying to deliver. Repetition and parallelism "drive the point home." (Consider Marc Antony's funeral oration and his repetition of "but Brutus is an honorable man," and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I have a dream...")

The formality of the Standard English in this speech is almost reminiscent of language "from an older time." The language is quite poetic at times in its alliteration -- e.g. "faithful friends," "forebears foughts," and "sovereign states." Kennedy skillfully uses the language to produce his desired effect upon the audience in presenting his oration.

The next aspect of this speech to be examined is, what is the purpose and function of this piece of oratory? What was the author's plan in creating this speech and what did he intend it to do for his audience?

The Inaugural Speech is the first speech delivered by Kennedy in his official capacity as the newly elected President of the United States. He is also introducing a new decade, 1960. The purpose of

his speech, then must accomplish a number of functions. Kennedy intends to inspire the American public, to show his and America's support for U.S. allies, to warn "probable enemies" of the resolve of American, and to also commence 1960 on an optimistic and strong note. The function of this speech, "to praise, to convince, and to impress" again confirms its identity as oratory.¹⁰

In the text, Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum, the authors examine the assumptions made by this piece of discourse. Kennedy, in creating his speech for the public, uses the assumptions "that American power, wealth, and will are unlimited," that "America can accomplish anything with determination," and that "America can help" other "poorer nations" not only because it is our obligation, but also because we have the "moral authority" to act accordingly.¹¹ In considering the audience to whom he is speaking, Kennedy calls upon "citizens" to work together: "Ask not what your country can do for you -- ask what you can do for your country." He continues to comment on the U.S. world role in the "fights" for freedom, defense, world economy, and social welfare. This speech introduces "an activist government," and lays the foundation for the beginning of an activist, social era.¹²

In this category, the receivers of discourse are the audience to whom Kennedy addresses his speech. This audience is composed of the American public and international listeners as well as viewers. As this piece of discourse is in the spoken mode, the receivers are classified as a large, generally unknown audience. As a result, Kennedy needs to appeal to a large cross-section of the public and

communicate his leadership message without offending anyone. Kennedy achieves this through careful choice of language and through careful construction of his speech. In this way he creates a piece of discourse which appeals to his varied range of receivers who are diverse in age, sex, occupations, etc. A leader of the people, Kennedy appeals to the spirit of patriotism and sense of duty, and not the individual problems of the common man.

CONCLUSIONS

In order to communicate a message or ideas to an audience, the writer/speaker must be able to understand or to be able to share certain information in regard to his own personal experiences and background with his audience's own varied personal experience(s) and background -- either individually or collectively. Consequently, the audience can then understand and "receive" meaning from the piece of discourse. In a sense, the writer/speaker must be able to "speak the same language" or "be on the same (or similar) wavelength" as the reader/listener. In this way "a bridge" or "construct" may be created between the two factions and communication and even perhaps change can take place.¹³ Afterall, the ultimate goal of rhetoric is to create or cause change in the listener/reader's view of the subject -- to cause a response.

The interrelation of the speaker/writer's idiolect, temporal-spatial/social/regional characteristics with those of the listener/reader combine to result in the "connection" between them becoming complete. That is to say, that if a writer/speaker considers those aspects which he has in common with his intended audience, the better he can achieve the purpose of his discourse and achieve true, meaningful communication as well.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Albert C. Baugh and Thomas Cable, A History of the English Language, third edition, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978), p. 371.
- ² John Fitzgerald Kennedy, A Memorial Album. Premier Albums, 356 West 40th Street, New York, NY.
- ³ Laurence Behrens, and Leonard J. Rosen, Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum, (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Co., 1982), p. 80.
- ⁴ Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. 16, 1979 ed., pp. 357-359.
- ⁵ William Labov, The Social Stratification of English in New City, (Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1966), p. 125.
- ⁶ Encyclopedia Americana, p. 359.
- ⁷ Peter Strevens, "Varieties of English," Papers in Language and Language Teaching, (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 83-84.
- ⁸ Martin Joos, "The Styles of the Five Clocks," Language, introductory readings, second edition, Virginia Clark et al., eds., (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), p. 412-415.
- ⁹ Behrens and Rosen, p. 79.
- ¹⁰ H. A. Gleason, Jr., "Language Variations," Language, introductory readings, third edition, Virginia Clark et al. eds., (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), p. 432-433.
- ¹¹ Behrens and Rosen, p. 79.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Harold E. Nugent, The Role of Audience Awareness in the Writing of College Freshman, unpub. doctoral dissertation, (PA: Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 1979), p. 289-291.

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